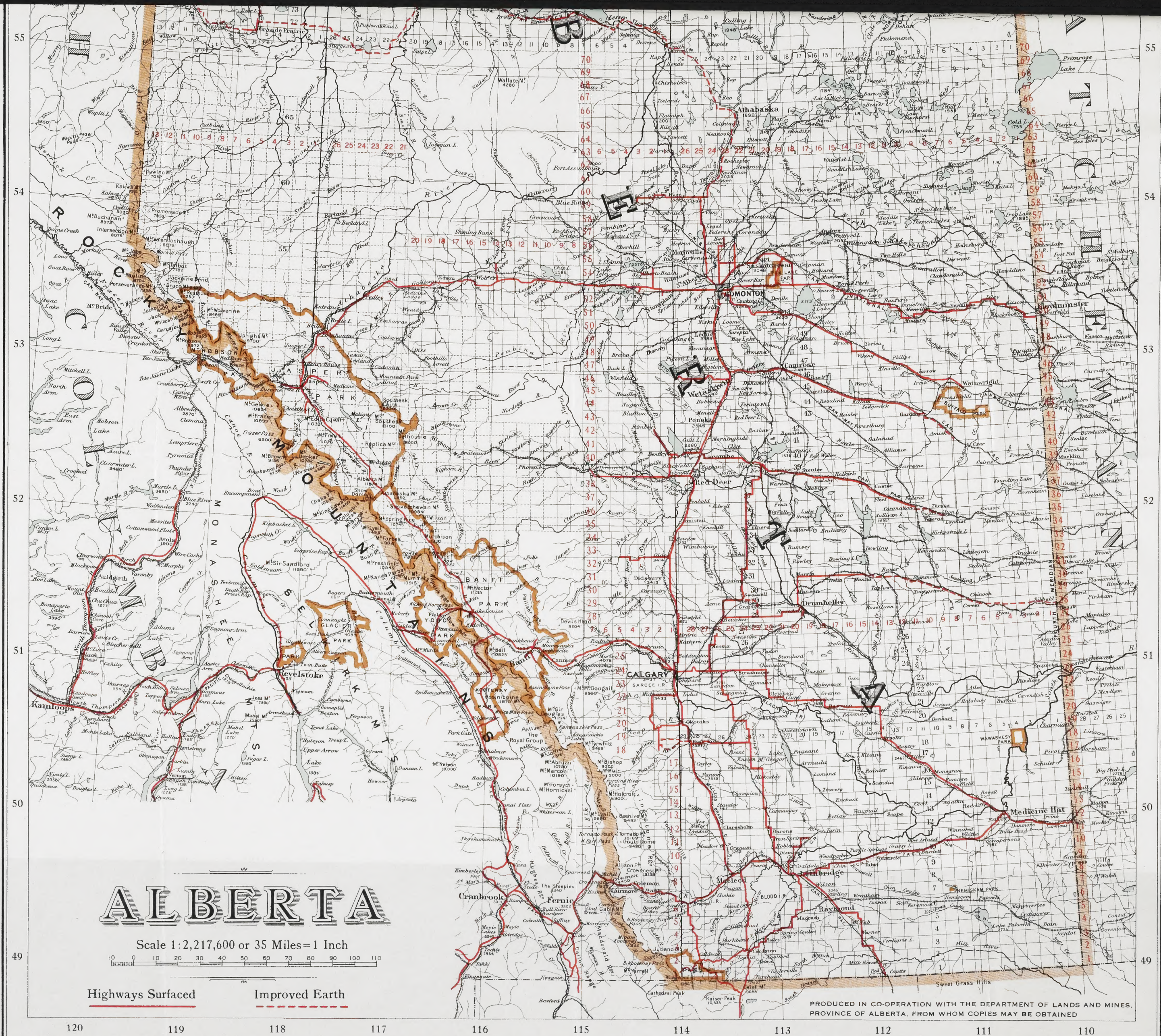








Alberta FOLKLORE

Quarterly

ALBERTA FOLKLORE QUARTERLY

VOL. 2, No. 2.

JUNE, 1946.

Alberta Folklore Quarterly is published by the University of Alberta under the provisions of the Alberta Folklore and Local History Project. The magazine aims to print authentic first hand accounts interpretative of the region and its people; to encourage the collection and preservation of the traditional materials of Alberta; and to help foster a literature indigenous to this part of the Canadian West.

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THE COVER

Chief Two Young Men of the Stoney Tribe of Morley, Alberta. One of the studies by the noted Indian photographer F. Gully of the Calgary Herald.

Special Notice

With this issue the *Alberta Folklore Quarterly* completes its initial run and suspends publication.

As indicated in the note carried in each issue at the top of the title page inside the front cover, the *Quarterly* was launched under the wing of the *Alberta Folklore and Local History Project*, primarily for the purpose of stimulating interest and support for that project. It was not intended that its publication should be continued after the expiration of the project, though enthusiasts hoped that enough interest might be aroused to lead to the formation of an Alberta Folklore Society which might take over the *Quarterly* as its official organ.

Now the project is complete and, though interest and support have been quite widespread, no society has yet emerged. The *Quarterly* must therefore make its bow and retire, with grateful acknowledgements to the writers who have contributed to its pages, and to the subscribers who have lent practical encouragement.

Contributors who still have available important and interesting material on Alberta's early history are referred to *The New Trail*, a quarterly published jointly by the University of Alberta and its Alumni Association, as a worthy medium of publication.

ROBERT NEWTON,
President.

Here and There

The approach of the Calgary Stampede recalls an amusing episode concerning my old friend Chief Calf Child of the Blackfeet, told me by that veteran pioneer and trader, Norman Luxton of Banff.

Calf Child was a truly noble red man, nearly six feet six in height, with glossy black braids and a diabolical sense of humor. And incidentally Calf Child always prided himself in taking the first prize at every stampede for being the best-dressed Indian, and for having the prize-winning tepee.

For years Norman Luxton, aided by an old-timer had been the judge of Indian costumes and tepees. This particular year his old friend had died and his place had been taken by an Anglican missionary well versed in the ways of the red men.

Evidently word reached the Chief that a Black Robe was to be one of the judges and the crafty Calf Child decided to make the most of the occasion. Imagine the surprise of the judges when they entered the Indian's tepee to see stretched right across the centre, from pole to pole, an enormous banner of white cotton as large as the mirrors in the Banff Springs Hotel on which had been painted in bold scarlet letters the motto "*God Bless Our Home.*" Evidently Calf Child considered that this indication of his devoutness would surely ingratiate him with the minister, who enthusiastically proposed that the Chief be awarded the first prize. But Norman, horrified by such a glaring anachronism, decided otherwise

and Calf Child received his defeat with his customary genial smile.

My first acquaintance with this resourceful Chief occurred at the Blackfoot village on the Calgary Stampede Grounds in July, 1927. I, with other palefaces, was endeavouring to get photos of the Indians in their war-paint and regalia, when an enormous Indian riding a fine horse with an eagle feather war-bonnet decorating its head almost rode us down, saying that the Indians didn't want to be photographed. When I replied in Cree the Chief became the essence of friendliness, drove off the other whites, dismounted and got his braves to pose for me.

En route back to Fort St. John I sent him copies of the photos and shortly afterwards received a typical Indian letter from my red friend. "Dear friend," it commenced, "I hope this finds you well as it leaves me at present." Then he went on to tell of poor crops, hard times and wound up with a touch for twenty-five dollars, which I sent him,—who knows why, since I never expected to see it again.

The next year I wrote Calf Child and mentioned that I was just leaving for Edmonton. Arriving at the city I registered at the Macdonald and returned about midnight to find Mr. Deedy, the night clerk, very much amused. "There are a couple of your friends here to visit you," he grinned and nodded to the other side of the rotunda.

Lo and behold! There was the tall figure of my friend Calf Child with a cowboy hat atop his blue-black braids surmounted by a tall

eagle feather and beside him the portly form of his squaw enveloped in a gaudy blanket. Shaking hands, I asked the clerk to give them a room which he refused to do, so I fixed them up with accommodation elsewhere and spent the next few days showing them the sights of the city. On the second day the chief entered my room with a large bundle wrapped in a black calfskin. It contained amongst other things, a sacred medicine bundle and medicine-pipe, scalp locks, a buffalo hide shield and numerous other articles. With a magnanimous gesture Calf Child stated he was giving me all this as a present. Then I knew I was stuck, for when an Indian gives you a present he expects about twice as much in reciprocation as would be the case if it was just a trading deal. My return present made a considerable hole in my bank account, and both of us were far too gentlemanly to ever mention the previous loan of the twenty-five dollars, which was not taken into consideration in closing the deal.

I didn't hear from Calf Child again till just before the Coronation. The letter was couched in the same terms as the former one and requested me to use my influence with King George (!) so that he would be permitted to attend what he called "the carnation." Unfortunately my influence was insufficient to meet the occasion and poor Joe did not attend the "carnation" after all.

Then about four years ago I learned that Calf Child's wife had just died and that the Chief was very ill. I sent him a note of condolence and by return mail received one of his stereotyped let-

ters. "Dear friend, I hope this finds you well as it leaves me at present" (to all intents and purposes the Chief was on his death bed). Then he recalled the loan I had made him fifteen years before and told me he was sending me his "war-suite" which I correctly interpreted to mean his "war-suit." Sure enough along came a beautiful suit of white elkskin decorated with scalp-locks and ermine-skins and a few weeks later word from the Indian Agent that my dusky friend had died and gone to the "Sand Hills."

* * * *

The following little story of six-gun prowess on the Alberta plains was sent me by Mr. Ernest St. George. The story told by President C. W. Buchanan of the Waldron Cattle Ranch Ltd., refers to J. C. Patterson who rode herd on the ranch back in 1883 and was reputed to be a marvellous shot.

"The following incident," says Mr. St. George, "proves what a wonderful man he was with the six-shooter. The first time he was up on the Waldron Ranch in the Porcupine, Doctor McEachran said to him one Sunday morning, 'I should like to show you a valley in our range that you have not had the opportunity of seeing.'

"As they rode along a blue grouse flew into the jackpines. 'How would you like one of them for your breakfast Doc?' asked Jim. Upon the Doctor saying he'd like one, Jim rode into the brush and presently there echoed the reports of two shots, followed by Jim emerging from the bush with the grouse, minus a head. The Doctor twitted him—as a famous man with a six-shooter—for having to take two shots to bring down this little bird. Jim

insisted he accompany him back and showed him that the first shot had been necessary to cut a small branch off, so that the second shot could shoot the head off and not blow the bird to pieces with the heavy .44 slug from his revolver."

"My father, Dr. Henry George," his son recalls "was Medical Officer to the North West Mounted Police in Calgary in 1890. He was called one day to the barracks to see Deerfoot, the famous Blackfoot Indian runner, (his right name being Bad Dried Meat) who had been arrested along with another Indian for looting a rancher's shack and was reported to be dying.

"He found Deerfoot naked except for his breechclout, lying on the floor and apparently lifeless. After taking his pulse and examining his eyes, the doctor realized that the Indian was not dying, nor had he even fainted. He was just shamming!

"My father, whose Blackfoot name was Sukenaki—from his having attended Chief Crowfoot at his death, that same year, said to Deerfoot: 'What are you dying for?' Deerfoot did not answer. 'Now,' my father said 'if you don't stop dying I will take you out and put you under the pump.' At this Deerfoot smiled broadly and replied in English. 'I'm dying for a smoke!'"

Superstition dies slowly with these untutored red children of plain and forest, as witness their unswerving belief in *weetigoes* and evil *maitous*. The *weetigo*, I might explain, is an evil spirit that enters the body of a sick man converting him, unless he is destroyed, into a cannibal, endangering the lives of every member

of the band. Hardly a spring goes by but some wandering band of nomad hunters become obsessed with the idea that there is one of these cannibal spirits haunting the outskirts of the camp, anxious to become domiciled within the person of some sick Indian. The means adopted by Crees, Blackfeet and Ojibways alike in ridding the camp of such a dangerous encumbrance was heroic in the extreme before the Mounted Police cracked down on such practices. Some years ago a band of frightened Crees herded into the Hudson's Bay Post at Wabiscaw, their faces masks of terror. To Factor Beaton they told their story. One of their band had become possessed of an evil spirit—a *weetigo*—and strange words were pouring from his lips (actually the Indian was delirious from a bad case of 'flu). The factor who was married to a Cree squaw and in many years of close association with the Indians had acquired many of their beliefs and superstitions, agreed there was only one thing to do. Get rid of the *weetigo*-possessed brave before he could devour any of the band! Loaning them muzzle-loaders, powder and ball, he despatched them on their grisly errand. First they riddled the poor sick creature with trade-bullets, then, lest, the evil spirit again re-enter the body and revive it, they drove a stake through it, deep into the mud floor of the cabin. Finally, to make assurances doubly sure, they set a torch to the building, fired off their guns to drive lurking spirits away and hurried from the haunted spot. Poor Beaton was in for a hot time afterwards when Mounted Police investigated the affair and came

within an ace of being convicted on a manslaughter charge.

Which reminds me of another peculiar case. Visiting a Cree camp I noticed an old leathery-faced crone,—just animated bones and parchment—lying neglected and uncared for on the outskirts of the camp. I gave her some tobacco and tea which her talon-like hands grabbed with hoarse croaks of delight. I learned from the Indians that she was supposed to be over one hundred and fifteen years old. The following year I heard how her two sons, warned by the medicine man that she was possessed of evil spirits that wouldn't let her die, decided to help their mother out. Kindling a huge ten foot fire of resinous spruce logs, they cast the poor creature on to this funeral pyre—alive. Watching till the body was consumed they raked through the ashes with a stick and found the heart still intact—sure sign that it must have been full of evil! So they "ponasked" the heart on a pointed stick as though it was a duck, stirred up the fire and watched it shrivel to a cinder. Then they were satisfied that their mother was at last at rest!

As you travel through the North you realize that but a few years ago, when the Indians depended largely on the caribou and game for sustenance, cannibalism was anything but infrequent in northern Alberta and the North West Territories. Looking over old Hudson's Bay Journals at Fort Chipewyan on Lake Athabasca, I read of numerous revolting cases of cannibalism on the part of natives driven to desperation by hunger. There is also the authenticated case of two Hudson's Bay Company mail-runners

who disappeared under peculiar and suspicious circumstances between Fort Norman and Fort Good Hope years ago. Starvation stalked the North that year, there were no rabbits and few fur-bearing animals, and the weather was bitterly cold. The old squaws, it was later discovered, had been camped beside the Mackenzie River below Fort Good Hope and it was noticed when they came into the fort that, in contrast to their emaciated tribesmen, they were looking hearty and well nourished. Later they boasted to other Indians that, being on the verge of starvation, they had seen these two mail-runners plodding along the river, and signed to them to come to their warming camp-fire. The two whites decided to camp there overnight and after a feed of dried meat, bannock and tea, rolled themselves in their rabbitskin robes and fell asleep. Assured that they were sleeping soundly the two squaws brained them with an axe, cut up the bodies and consigned them to the pot. One of the squaws complained that one of the victims, a heavy smoker, didn't taste very good. Father Pettitot, veteran missionary to the Fort Norman region also tells of a young Indian guide he had on Great Bear Lake who had devoured both his mother and sister during a period of famine. The good father admitted that, since he was pretty plump, he went to bed with a certain amount of mental disquiet and trepidation, but banished it with the realization that there was lots of food in the grub-box, and lots of caribou around, so that it would not be necessary for his guide to indulge his appetite for human flesh.

The movements of the great caribou herds that provide sustenance, not only to the nomad Indian tribes that prey upon them, but also to the Eskimos of the Arctic Coast, are always uncertain and mysterious. In 1906, when I first set foot on the sterile shores of Hudson Bay, it was estimated that some thirty million caribou roamed the barren lands, north to the Arctic Islands, east from the Mackenzie River to Hudson Bay and south to the pine forests of northern Alberta. As a rule a northern migration would set in in the late spring, the animals travelling with castanet-like clicking of heart-shaped hooves in huge droves towards the Arctic Coast. The bulls would remain on the mainland grazing, while the females would migrate by certain crossings they used year after year to the Arctic Islands to have their young. In the fall they would return by the same crossings to the mainland to rejoin bulls. The mating season over and with the snow already commencing to fly, they moved like palpitating dun-coloured seas over the treeless Barrens until they reached the protection of the timber, where they would usually spend the winter, renewing their northern migration again in the spring.

One of the native races that depended so largely on the caribou for sustenance were the so-called "Blonde Eskimos"—known to us as Cogmollocks—of Coronation Gulf. Until Stefansson met these people in 1910 they had been absolutely isolated from the other Eskimos seven hundred miles to the westward, and lived under stone-age conditions. They hunted with bows of wood, which had to be obtained by a long journey

into the hostile Indian country to the southward, the so-called Land of Little Sticks. Their arrows were tipped with native copper and they used bone or copper snow-knives, though some had knives from metal taken from vessels wrecked in earlier efforts at Arctic exploration.

In the summer and fall these Cogmollocks went inland and hunted caribou, thus obtaining skins for winter clothing and establishing meat-caches. When the ice had set and there was sufficient hard-drifted snow on the surface to furnish good blocks for their dome-like snow igloos, they moved out on the ice, built their snow village, hunted seal, and, after the white men came, trapped white foxes for their pelts. They lighted their snowy domiciles with windows of sea-ice and heated them with dish-shaped stone lamps in which seal-oil was used for fuel and pieces of moss or cotton-plant for wick.

It was not long before white trappers and traders commenced to flock into the country. They brought with them high-powered rifles, unlimited supplies of deadly ammunition, kettles, knives, coal-oil, compacts and chewing gum to say nothing of silk underwear, and got them drunk on methylhydrate. At first the primitive Eskimos' wants had been simple and they had little incentive to trap white foxes. The first thing in the introduction of civilization was to teach the Eskimo to want things he had never seen or heard of before, then to teach them to trap white foxes in order to open up a profitable commerce.

In 1923 a 30-30 Winchester rifle, costing around thirty dollars outside, sold for twelve and some-

times twenty white fox pelts, worth an average value then of some fifty dollars in London or New York. Three boxes of cartridges represented the value of a white fox, and boxes of cartridges were often used as currency.

From the very first the destructive high-power rifle had proved the best seller. But at last every mother's son from eight to eighty owned one—the trade had reached the saturation point, a fact deplored by all. It was the ubiquitous Captain Klengenberg who arose to the occasion in characteristic manner by importing hard steel ramrods, giving them to the natives and telling them to scrape the inside of their rifle-barrels freely to take the powder out "and make them shoot straight." This, of course, soon ruined the rifling so that the guns would not shoot straight. New rifles were required and the lucrative trade renewed.

This indiscriminate sale of rifles and ammunition to boys and men alike soon led to a massacre of the caribou, which were often left lying to rot where they fell. Soon the erstwhile vast herds dwindled alarmingly. Not only that, but the females forsook their customary paths of migration to and from Victoria Land to have their young. In vain the Cogmollocks waited at the ancient crossings, which caribou had used as far back as the oldest member of the tribe remembered, and they couldn't understand. As a consequence the formerly independent and self-sustaining Eskimo became more and more dependent on the imported food and clothing brought in by traders and upon debt from the trading posts. One trader with whom I discussed the

serious and unfavourable effects these conditions were creating amongst the natives guffawed loudly. "The sooner the caribou are all killed off the better," he insisted. "As long as there are lots of caribou around and they've lots of meat to eat they won't bother about trapping white foxes for us. When the caribou are gone they'll have to trap—or starve—and that means we'll sell a lot more imported clothing and food, sowbelly, biscuits and flour, than we do now."

It was simply a case of the Indian and the buffalo over again. As long as the caribou are plentiful the Eskimo is independent of the white man, but once the caribou are gone he becomes the white man's slave. Thus, in the space of thirty odd years, the once almost limitless herds of caribou, estimated by Ernest Seton at thirty million, and one of the main sources of native food supply is rapidly disappearing from Northern Alberta and the Northwest Territories as it did along the Alaskan coast many years before from similar causes.

This is greatly at variance with the opinions expressed by Ernest Seton in his "Arctic Prairies" after his visit to the Barren Lands in 1907, when he thought that the natural increase of these herds would compensate for those killed off. In considering the natives that live off the caribou we must include not only those of the Mackenzie River region but many that live south of the N.W.T. borderline in Northern Alberta. There is the Caribou-Eater tribe that trades at Fort Fitzgerald, and a mixed population of Crees and Chipewyans which stretches along the edge of the wooded area from

Fort Chipewyan east to Fort Churchill. From there a scattered Eskimo population completes the circle round to the mouth of the Mackenzie River.

This means that the caribou are now encircled by Indians and Eskimos, all in contact with white traders and armed with modern repeating rifles. And many of these Eskimos don't buy their cartridges by the box of twenty, *but by the case of one thousand!* In the old days when transportation was difficult and costly, cartridges were conserved by the traders and an Indian or Eskimo was often lucky to get half a box (of ten) and used them sparingly. Natives and trappers alike feed their sleigh-dogs on the meat and one caribou will only feed a dog-team for a couple of nights or so. Furthermore caribou are also killed as largely for their skins, to furnish clothing, as for their meat, and I have actually seen eighteen large bales of caribou-skins shipped from one post alone, most of the animals having been killed largely for their skins (which had been purchased at seventy-five cents apiece) and the meat left on the barrens to rot or be devoured by prowling wolves.

To replace this terrible wastage the Dominion Government, it will be recalled, brought a considerable number of domesticated reindeer from the Lomen reindeer farm in Alaska across the Rockies to the Mackenzie Delta where they are now being farmed out to proficient Eskimo "cowboys."

* * * *

Southern Alberta has its Kamoosees, its Kootnai Browns and its Paddy Nolans, but Northern Alberta and the North West Territories cherish the memory of

Flynn Harris, criminal lawyer, Mounted Policeman, Hudson's Bay trader, Indian Agent and pioneer, whose abiding thirst could be satisfied with red ink when whisky and other products of John Barleycorn didn't happen to be available. Not only could Flynn quote the classics backwards, but he was a linguist of no mean ability, being master of seven languages, including Esperanto.

A thick-set man, with low brow, close cropped hair and a terrible squint, Flynn went to school with Sir Robert Borden and was well on his way to becoming an outstanding criminal lawyer when the Call of the Wild and an excessive thirst drove him into the arms of the Mounted Police whom he assisted in the capture of Chief Big Bear. A few years later found him factor at the isolated Hudson's Bay trading post of Fond-du-lac on Lake Athabasca, where his season's bookkeeping could be cleaned up in a couple of days at the end of the year. Nevertheless the Commissioner, to his intense surprise, received from this God-forsaken spot a requisition signed by Flynn Harris calling for two pencils, a day-book and ledger and *five gallons of red ink*. Astonished at this latter item, where a thimbleful would suffice for a year, he wrote Mr. Harris demanding his reason for requiring such a prodigious quantity of this scarlet fluid. Flynn's reply was concise and to the point. Across the bottom of the letter he scrawled the words: "What I don't use I abuse!" and returned it to the Head Office. Later, while purser on the *S.S. Grahame* his fondness for the cup that cheers led to a noisy alter-

cation with the District Manager. Indignantly Flynn tossed aside his books, lept into a birch bark canoe, paddled ashore and proceeded to sleep off his potations on the rocks of Fort Chipewyan. When he awakened the steamer was gone and Flynn turned to wood-cutting for the winter finally landing at Fort Simpson with his Chipewyan wife to fulfill the functions of Magistrate and Indian Agent.

It was in this capacity that he learned that a trapper had sneaked into the fort with a considerable supply of contraband hootch, and was holding wassail in a log cabin just below the police barracks occupied by Sergeant Nitchie Thorne. Unerring footsteps led him to the spot. When an hour later Nitchie heard of the illicit liquor and strapped on his side arms preparatory to making an arrest Flynn was laid out on the floor considerably the worse for the stranger's hospitality. Thorne's entry upon the scene under the circumstances was as embarrassing to him as it was to everybody but Flynn Harris. There was, however, no alternative. The trapper was arrested, thrown into the hoosegow and, when the magistrate had sobered up, was arraigned on the charge of bringing in contraband liquor. Gazing at the man severely Flynn fined him a hundred dollars, then called Nitchie aside. "Come on," he said, planking down fifty dollars of his own, "I want fifty dollars from you." And Nitchie had perforce to dig out the fifty dollars to make up the culprit's fine. Strange indeed are the ways of northern justice!

The last time I saw Flynn, he and George Slater of the Northern

Traders, were sitting disconsolately on an old scow on the riverfront at Fort Fitzgerald gloomily eyeing the grey waters. Suddenly Flynn came to life. "Say, George," he remarked to his companion who was trying desperately to keep his rebellious stomach under control, "that was a swell trade we made last night!"

"Trade!" mumbled George, "what trade?"

"Why," beamed Flynn, "don't you remember we swopped false teeth. These I got from you are a hell of a lot better fit than those of mine you're wearing.

One look into the squinting low-browed visage beside him was enough. Turning pea-green poor George unloaded his stomach into the Slave River.

* * * *

The fact that it is considered a disgrace amongst Indians if a woman is unable to bear children was taken advantage of by a shrewd trader at Keg River in the Peace River Country some years ago. George Clarke of the Hudson's Bay Company and Bill Harris of Revillon Frères were at daggers drawn in competing for the furs of the local Beaver Indians. Spring had come, and with it a horde of red men with hefty packs of furs upon their backs. Each dusky hunter was given the customary hand-out of sow-belly, hard-tack, tea and tobacco to enable him to have a snack before he commenced his trading. Every Indian was, of course, deeply indebted to the respective trading companies for the trapping outfits they'd obtained in credit in the fall—and each trader knew that if he didn't collect that debt right now it would be a total loss. So

each watched the rival post with jealous eyes.

After the lapse of an hour, when not a single Indian showed up, George Clarke became worried and sent a half-breed scout over to the Revillon post to snoop around and see what was going on. He returned hotfoot to report that *all* the Indians, both H.B.C. and Revillons hunters, were over at the Revillon post gorging themselves with oranges—a new fruit they'd never seen before, which Harris had smuggled in unbeknown to his rival. Furthermore, Harris would only let a hunter buy *one orange on one pelt*, the rest had to be traded out in other goods. As a result he was amassing a small fortune from George's Indians.

Wrathfully George strode up and down the empty store when he espied Tall Pine and his wife, munching succulent oranges and making their way towards the store *sans* fur and *sans* fur pack. Suddenly he recalled the fact that of all things an Indian woman fears its the inability to bear children. As the squaw pigeon-toed into the store George leapt across the counter, dashed the orange from her mouth and proceeded to berate the astonished Tall Pine.

"Don't you want your wife ever to have children," he demanded. "Don't you realize that these things you're eating are what the white women eat to prevent having children—they call them barren berries!"

In no time the alarming story spread over to the Revillon post. Wrathful Indians tossed the delectable fruit upon the floor and beat it back over to the Hudson's Bay

Post, beside themselves at the fancied trick played upon them by the astonished Harris, who was forced to watch his cases of oranges gradually rot and grow putrid, while the Indians swarmed about George Clarke, their saviour, demanding he write the Government at Ottawa to send out a doctor to put their women right again.

It has long been the custom at Hudson's Bay Company posts to keep a Journal of daily events. At Christmas and New Year, when celebrations were in full swing the factor sometimes omitted his daily entries and filled them in later from memory. At Fort Simpson this system produced surprising results, for on Jan. 1st 18—the entry ran:

"Jan 1st 18—

"Weather fine. Wind North. Mrs. Belcourt gave birth to a bouncing baby boy at 5 o'clock this morning."

And for the following nine days the daily entry in the Journal was "Ditto—Ditto—Ditto!"

It is with regret that your Editor has to advise you that, with the discontinuance of the Rockefeller Grant, the Alberta Folklore and Local History Project will be terminated at the end of August. Consequently, since the *Alberta Folklore Quarterly* has not been long enough in circulation to become self-supporting, this will be the concluding issue and steps will be taken to refund subscribers whatever credits may be due them. It was hoped to form a Folklore Society to take over the work, which would require double the number of present subscribers and an annual fee of two dollars to include the subscription to

the magazine, but so far this has been found impracticable.

In conclusion we want to thank one and all of our subscribers for their enthusiastic support and for the excellent contributions they have been kind enough to send in

from time to time. The associations have been most pleasant and cordial at all times and we can only state that we relinquish the editorial chair and the direction of this department with genuine regret.

Mystery Man of the Alaska Highway

By

Philip H. Godsell, F.R.G.S.

When Uncle Sam's friendly invasion army headed north from Fort St. John and dived into the jungles they must have wondered at those gasoline tins that decorated the tops of the pines and hung in rusty disarray from spreading branches. Yet, behind those rusty cans lies the fantastic story of the futile effort of Charles E. Bedaux, friend of the Duke of Windsor, to conquer the region now traversed by the defence highway. Whitened bones of prairie broncs picked clean by prowling wolves and coyotes; twisted gears of caterpillar tractors embedded in the clutching grip of quaking muskeg, and the deflated remnants of rubber rafts tell of the disorganized retreat of the Napoleon of the Rockies from the saw-toothed ranges to the northward.

It was back in the summer of '34 that the name of Charles Bedaux first became impacted upon the Canadian Northwest, and unbelieving residents of Fort St. John heard with amazement of the approaching army of exploration. From Dawson Creek on Pouce Coupe prairie, sixty miles to the southward, a *de luxe* ex-

pedition such as the North had never seen was preparing to launch itself upon the wilderness. A mysterious expedition that was going to show insular trappers, traders and pioneer sod-busters something new in exploration. Equipped with gleaming, low-slung limousines, Citroen tractor trucks, similar to those used by the Swiss army, rubber pontoons, truck loads of shiny suitcases and cases of champagne; a lady's maid and herds of capering prairie broncs, stocky Charles E. Bedaux told inquiring reporters in throaty French accents of his plans.

"It's fun to do things others call impossible," he flashed his magnetic smile. "Everyone says that to take a fleet of automobiles through the unmapped Rockies, where there are no roads, can't be done. I say it can. If I succeed it will open up a vast region which has never been explored. The Government," he laughed, "hasn't much faith in me, but I have done the impossible before."

The reporters smiled.

"When Citroen crossed Africa in caterpillar tractors," he explained, "I said it could be done in ordinary automobiles. They

said I was crazy, that the desert was difficult enough even for caterpillars. I took five passenger cars and went across. Now everybody's doing it."

What Mr. Bedaux *didn't* seem to realize was that crossing Africa in caterpillar tractors was a different proposition to climbing the precipitous slopes of the Rockies with these clumsy vehicles, wallowing through unending miles of gripping muskeg, and shouldering through primeval forests pierced only by the runways of the fox, the wolf and the lynx, where eight years before, I had experienced troubles of my own in getting through with a pack-train.

Chugging in to Fort St. John, the staccato cough of the caterpillar tractors awakening strange echoes in the solitudes, came the expedition at last; two shiny limousines, five lumbering tank-like Citroen tractors, asbestos tents, a hydroplane, three river *bateaux*, electrical gear galore, a uniformed wireless operator with equipment, cowpunchers in gaudy chaps and ten-gallon hats, and a hundred and thirty prairie brones who'd never seen a mountain that didn't have a man-made trail. There was Madame Bedaux, too, gracious and smiling, with her pretty French maid, Josephine, companion of former jaunts; Madame Alberta Chiesa, a guest, and the irrepressible Charles E. Bedaux himself with his enormous valet, Bob Chisholm—all full of bright ideas.

The first one thrilled the poverty-stricken settlement to the core. Learning that Fort St. John lacked a water supply this generous stranger promised with a kindly gesture to finance a forty-

thousand dollar pipeline to bring water in from Charlie Lake.

Marooned settlers at this forgotten frontier outpost gazed at each other with questioning eyes. Who was this magnetic Charles Bedaux who travelled like some Oriental potentate and tossed money around with princely splendour—and what was the object of this incursion?

Like Haley's comet streaking across the heavens, the name of this mercurial Frenchman flashed from time to time across the headlines. A nine-dollar-a-week itinerant waiter in New York, his first job after landing from his native France with only a few dollars in his peans had been washing glasses in a waterfront saloon. Then he'd worked as sand-hog on the East River tunnel, and later patented an efficiency squeeze system to exact the last ounce of sweat from the worker that had earned him labour's undying hatred, netted him untold millions and made him the leader of a fashionable international set; friend of money barons, ambassadors and princes, whom he entertained with regal splendour at his magnificent French chateau.

It was after his mysterious trip into the Northwest, when Wallis Warfield Simpson fled through the night to seek sanctuary in his famous Chateau de Cande, that Bedaux first attained world fame. Behind those battlemented walls the exiled Duke of Windsor and the lady he loved defied the edicts of mitred bishops and rounded out a romance that caused a throne to totter. Advance agent for Windsor's trip to investigate the ways of the American working man two years later, labour's angry pro-

tests echoed through the nation against the man who'd devised the hated system—and the trip was off!

After the fall of France, Bedaux and his beautiful American-born wife were confined in the monkey-house at the Bois de Bolougne zoo by the Nazis. Escaping, he next showed up in Africa, where, prior to the American occupation, he was living in luxury with a large staff at the Alletti Hotel in Algiers, shunned by Britons and Americans as an active pro-Vichyite. In the dark hours of Darlan's assassination his name again flashed like a meteor across front pages when he was arrested on suspicion of being linked with those who planned the tragedy. Released, he was re-arrested on the order of General Giraud on a charge, according to Secretary of State Hull, of trading with the enemy. Mysterious and unpredictable as ever, he turned up in December, 1943, at Miami where he was promptly seized by immigration authorities for alleged passport violation.

As for the destination of this expedition it seemed to be wrapped in even greater mystery than the identity of its leader. "We're heading for Telegraph Creek," was Bedaux's vague reply to all questions.

"Telegraph Creek!" guffawed a grizzly old trapper who'd been eyeing preparations with an enigmatic smile. "Say, brother, you're wastin' a lot o' time foolin' around with them thar fancy cayuses an' tanks an' all this fuss an' feathers. Go back to Edmonton, take the train to Prince Rupert and catch the steamer. Telegraph Creek's right on the Stikine, right on the steamboat run—an' a no-account

place at that. This way you'll land nowhere—an' it's gonna cost you *plenty!*"

In skirmishing order the Bedaux cavalry, headed by the chief packer, charged into the timber. A hundred prairie broncs, loaded with shiny tins of gasoline for the motorized transport bringing up the rear, stumbled ahead to establish advance bases. West to Cache Creek, and north along the turbulent Halfway they climbed and slid and stumbled. Sinking now to their bellies in quaking swamp, or engulfed in the icy waters of frothing streams that came tumbling down from the mountains, they floundered on. The first pitched battle occurred, not with ravening wolves or grizzlies that the expedition most feared, but with diminutive bees and wasps that swarmed in hissing anger from their nests in the moss beneath the invading hoofs. That unrehearsed rodeo beneath the pines beat anything seen at Calgary or Cheyenne. No frontier day celebration produced horses that could buck, and keep on bucking with such sustained and conscientious persistence as this gasoline-toting cavalcade. Flimsy cans shot skywards in scintillating glory, spraying rocks and muskegs with showers of odoriferous "rain", to remain suspended in the pine boughs and sway drunkenly in the breeze.

In the wake of the capering pack-train snorted lumbering caterpillar-tractor trucks, stimulating the languid livers of pulchritudinous passengers to unprecedented activity as they jolted over up-ended rocks, fallen carcasses of trees, and slithered down precipitous cutbanks. Wallowing like antediluvian monsters

through the morasses they carried fear and terror to wall-eyed redskins.

No rattling Parisian taxi ever wove a more devious and perilous course through the streets of that once fair metropolis than did Bedaux's snorting tractors as they wallowed through the wilds. Northern gods looked down and laughed, tossing obstacle after obstacle in the path of these frustrated heroes, opening the floodgates of heaven and turning placid streams into raging torrents.

As the rear-guard of the conquering army headed northward on its thousand mile trip to nowhere old-timers shook their heads. What was it all about? Where were they going? And why? Supposing they got those unwieldy tractors three hundred miles or more back in the bush—what of it? They'd only be marooned there till horses brought the passengers out! But one or two who'd heard the distant and as yet faint rumblings of Europe wondered if there wasn't more behind this expedition than met the eye, and whispered that Bedaux was in the pay of some foreign government.

From out of the rugged timber-strewn country to the northward news of this modern Hannibal filtered through to Fort St. John and Hudson Hope by dispatch riders sent to keep the waiting world in touch with the progress of the expedition into "unexplored" land wherein Hudson's Bay factors had traded with the red men for a century and a quarter. Each brought some hair-raising story of tribulation, disaster and high adventure that shrieked to high heaven of bad judgment

and worse management. For trappers, traders and Indians thought no more of penetrating into this region with a cayuse, a few traps and a rifle than does the city dweller of going to the corner store for groceries.

From somewhere near the Sifton Pass mud-bespattered riders on jaded ponies brought to Fort St. John another message. Wireless equipment had been jettisoned. Caterpillar tractors, though serviced by a crew of experts brought especially from France, were continually breaking down; a search party was looking for Jim Blakeman, cowboy packer, who'd mysteriously disappeared. Then came another message: Blakeman had turned up! He'd gone back to recover a load bucked from a refractory pack-horse. Heavy rains had wiped out the trail. A nomad Indian with a perverted sense of humour had misdirected him and he'd all but succumbed to exposure, hunger and mosquito bites.

The tractors had been beaten by the weather, streams ordinarily fordable had been converted into raging torrents by heavy rains. The Halfway River above Graham was found a raging fury. Attempting to avoid a crossing by skirting the mountainside the rain-soaked gumbo gave way, plunging two of the unwieldy vehicles three hundred feet down a precipice to be smashed to atoms on the rock-strewn riverbed below. Barely in time to save their necks, Madame Bedaux and the fair Josephine had leapt to safety. "Fortunately," reported Bedaux, "we anticipated trouble, and four of our motion picture machines were trained on the cars at the

time!" The raging Halfway claimed another tractor. On a raft of thirty-foot logs decorated with bloated rubber pontoons the expedition was being ferried across. Caught in the fierce current the raft careened with race-horse speed down-stream towards the boiling rapids below. Plunging into the icy current the cowboy sailors swam to safety; while the "unsinkable" raft, with its load and tractor disappeared into the white spume of the rapids, caromed against the canyon wall and disappeared forever around the bend—headed on its long unauthorized journey down the Peace to the Polar Sea.

Moccasined Indians brought word that many horses had been drowned, or lost through injury, and valuable food supplies ruined whilst swimming them across streams. Much the worse for wear the two surviving tractors were lurching drunkenly along with rheumatic squeaks and lightening loads, while horses were nearing the point of exhaustion.

More hair-raising disasters! Headed by F. Geake, a party succeeded in some mysterious manner in getting caught in a flood on the Musqua when the river—as these mountain streams are apt to do—rose eight feet overnight. Caught on a submerged knoll in the middle of the river amidst a bunch of fear-maddened, plunging horses they were saved from death after being immersed to their necks in icy water half a day. Thomas Grainger was drowned in the Kwadcha River.

In their asbestos tents Madame Bedaux and her ladies crouched around the stove, the sinister silence of the night pierced by the

banshee wails of ravening wolves and yelping coyotes. Led by jungle instinct they slunk through the shadows with gleaming eyes and slaverling jaws, waiting to feast on hapless horses fast weakening and lagging on the trail.

With predatory wolves skirmishing on their flanks, and devouring gaunt horses, that daily died or were abandoned, the bedraggled adventurers, abandoning useless tractors, limped in a series of forced and painful marches to the lonely Hudson's Bay post at Whitewater.

Unused to muskegs, and continual wading through icy streams, the pack-horses were succumbing daily to the ravages of hoof-rot and swamp fever. Thirty died in a couple of days. By September 27th only eighty of the original hundred and thirty were fit to load. "We have horses enough—but not enough horse strength," Bedaux moaned, "to carry our food and equipment."

The Napoleon of the Rockies had met his Waterloo. The signal for retreat was sounded. Trappers and riders, coming in to Fort St. John, likened it to a rout. With a two-foot fall of snow blanketing slippery hillsides, and surviving horses sagging at the knees or swaying under half-loads, there was danger of the whole party being marooned in the bush for the winter.

On October 16th, John G. Bock alighted from his slat-ribbed cayuse at Hudson Hope and announced that the defeated Bedaux expedition would arrive the following day. And arrive it did! Two dilapidated ladies, to say nothing of the fair but mosquito-bitten Josephine; a bunch of

bearded, smoke-begrimed men in patched and greasy overalls, and a woefully reduced number of gaunt horses that staggered beneath the weight of empty pack-saddles. Gone were the tractors, the rubber rafts, the wireless and all other "aids" to exploration *de luxe*.

The genial and enterprising Bedaux had *not* succeeded in taking his motorized cavalcade across the Rockies to its unimportant destination. Neither had he succeeded in demonstrating his ability to accomplish the impossible. Speaking as one who has covered this region countless times by pack-train and dog-team I would venture to say that this highly publicized expedition succeeded in one thing only. In confirming the prophecies and warnings of those who knew the region, and in furnishing a shining example of how *not* to attempt the conquest of the wilderness.

Standing amidst the dilapidated wreckage of his abortive expedition, a mud-stained woe-begone figure, the mercurial leader refused to admit defeat and smiled away his unceremonious retreat. "We hope," stated Charles Bedaux in a Press despatch, "to tackle the undertaking next year—and go through with it. The gasoline consumption of the five tractors was terrifically high. When we abandoned, or lost the machines we had gasoline for only a hundred miles, and our next cache was two hundred miles away. The driving bands were ruined by the constant wearing of the gumbo mud. The engineers who designed the tractors didn't know

what gumbo mud was like. And hoof-rot did the rest!"

It was variously reported that this fantastic expedition, that made the eyes of pioneer trappers pop out of their heads, cost close to a million dollars. There is no doubt it cost *plenty*. "This trip has been unique," smiled the irrepressible Bedaux. A conclusion that no one has yet been known to disagree with.

On February 19th, 1944, word was flashed over the radio that Charles Bedaux had committed suicide at Miami, Florida, by taking an overdose of sleeping tablets. His death occurred as two special assistant attorneys-general were preparing to seek federal grand jury indictments charging Bedaux with treason arising out of his activities in Vichy, France and Algiers, prior to the American invasion of North Africa. On the previous Tuesday morning United States Attorney Biddle stated in Washington Bedaux's attorney found him unconscious in his quarters at the immigration bureau. Rushed in an ambulance to Jackson Hospital he remained in a coma till his death, leaving behind a suicide note, the contents of which have not been revealed.

In the light of these events old-timers are again wondering if there wasn't more beneath the surface of Bedaux's mystery trip through the strategic region now traversed by the Alaska military highway than has been revealed, and if, as some suspected at the time, he wasn't actually working for some foreign government.

The Last Sun Dance

By the Late

Richard G. Hardisty

I shall never forget my boyhood impressions of an Indian festival of which I was an eye-witness when the last Sun Dance was held on the river-flats in the heart of the area now known as the City of Edmonton. Prior to the time of which I shall speak civilization had been slowly but surely creeping into the west, yet at that time with the exception of the employees of the Hudson's Bay Company, there were not more than ten white men between Fort Garry and the Rocky Mountains, and they were mostly missionaries. Civilization had already affected the Indians, sometimes disastrously, for thousands had died of smallpox and scarlet fever, and contacts with Hudson's Bay officers and missionaries had already modified some of the tribal rites and customs. The Sun Dance, which but a few years earlier had been a savage and gruesome pagan rite, was becoming a more peaceful and social gathering.

Up to the early eighteen-seventies there had been a practically constant state of war between the Crees and the Blackfeet. The Crees were "Woods Indians" who inhabited the timbered and park lands through which runs the North Saskatchewan River. The Blackfeet, Bloods and Peigans were "Plains Indians" who ranged from Montana north to the upper waters of the same river. Fort Edmonton was the chief trading post in the Cree country. Rocky Mountain House, on the headwaters of the Saskatchewan, was

established to trade with the Blackfeet with the idea of keeping them away from the trading posts used by their enemies the Crees. The Plains Indians mainly relied on the buffalo herds for food and clothing. The Woods Indians trapped fish and fur-bearing animals. They had no knowledge of fish nets, and when food became scarce in the woods, which was by no means infrequently, the Crees sent buffalo hunting expeditions to the plains. Such expeditions into hostile country were usually made by small parties, for speed in attack and retreat were major factors in Indian tactics.

At last the tribes met in a great peace conference near where Wetaskiwin now stands, the Crees encamped on the north side of the hill near the present townsite, and the Blackfeet on the south side. Chiefs and headmen conferred on the summit of the hill, and when finally the Pipe of Peace was smoked the hill was given the Cree name Wetaskatwinatinac—meaning Peace Hill and the origin of the name of the present town. Peace was never afterwards broken between the tribes.

A few years later a great gathering of Cree Indians at Fort Edmonton staged the last Sun Dance, and though I was but a youngster at the time, the picture is still clear in my mind's eye after all these years. For more than a week the Indians had been coming in, and the river flats below the Fort were dotted with tepees of buffalo hide. The encampment was about three-quar-

ters of a mile east of the Fort. The Legislative Buildings now occupy the site of the Fort and baseball and football grounds have taken the place of the Indian encampments on the flats. After sunset, camp fires glowed, the banks of the river, covered with pine and spruce, making an intensely dark background below the skyline, made the camp fires bright and dotted the plain with brilliant light. The beating of drums, the howling of dogs joined the voices of those keeping time to the drum beat. This religious gathering had been for ages an annual event at which were featured the making of sacrifices and the enduring of self-inflicted torture. The conjuror rehearsed his medicine hymns—looked to his medicine bag—fixed his rattles and bells and retouched his ghastly costume. The warriors burnished their war dress. The women made ready their finery, though all they had, such as beaded leggings, a leather girdle—decorated with brass tacks—would be contained in a small bag made of calfskin.

The selection of the tree to be used as the "Idol Pole" was carried out with great ceremony. This "Idol Pole" was set up in the centre of the enclosure. For walls, small poles were set in the ground, sloping inward, and covered with leafy branches, making a good shelter from rain or sun. The walls formed a large circle with the pole standing about 30 feet high in the centre. One opening was left as an entrance, but this was closed with a buffalo robe during the ceremony. The "Idol Pole" was decorated with different coloured clays and streamers of red and blue tape or braid.

Long pieces of shaganapie, reaching from the top of the centre pole to the circumference of the lodge, carried small bells, dried bones, and in former days the scalps taken in their last battle. Strong lines made from buffalo hide swung loose to the ground from the very top of the centre pole.

The enclosure would hold, seated on the ground, about a hundred braves. No women or children were permitted to enter during the ceremony. They, however, sat outside encircling the enclosure and taking part in the pow-wow, raising shrill but musical voices to the high heavens, keeping time to the rhythm of the drum beats. This all took time—it took preparation and rehearsal. The festival lasted for six days with but one performance a day and that at noon, by the sun.

In former days any of the warriors who desired to call upon the Sun God to favour him against his enemies in war and to supply his needs to maintain himself and family, took part in the ceremony, by sacrifice and self-inflicted torture. At this time, however, the Sun was invoked to witness only the cruel ordeals of youths who desired to become warriors and be recognized as men. In this last Sun Dance, twelve young men qualified as braves daily. The warriors, led by the chiefs and headmen, gathered in full war paint, naked but for a breech cloth—brass rings hanging loose on their ankles; dozens of brass rings on their wrists and forearms—strings of bear claws and elk teeth round their necks. They move towards the temple, led by conjurors and medicine men, the medicine men chanting in doleful notes and in unknown tongues,

petitionary and sacrificial hymns, their faces and bodies painted in alternate streaks of white and yellow — their ornaments around neck, waist and ankles are human bones. The drums beat and the medicine men dance, going forward. The chief walks quietly behind, but the warriors, sounding the tribal warwhoop, go through all kinds of contortions. They enter the enclosure and sit on the ground, their bodies moving and swaying, their voices raised to the beat of the drums.

The medicine men, now opposite each other, dance back and forth, chanting their incantation to the Sun to bless the gathering, working themselves and the warriors up to a frenzy of excitement. In the meantime, the women and youngsters have taken their place on the outside, and their voices blend with the warriors' and the drums beat louder.

About fifteen minutes before noon six young men, clean, their copper skins glistening in the sun — they are naked but for the breech cloth, no ornament, no paint — enter and dance the war dance, facing outward from the centre pole. They look fearlessly into the eyes of the warriors as they circle several times. Proud they are, for they have become experts in the use of bow and arrow, in tracking game, in trapping, in wood and prairie lore and all the many activities of the hunter and provider. Now they are to go through the test of courage and endurance to become warriors — taking their place in councils of the tribe — winning the privilege of seeking the hand of some girl — their eyes having no doubt already caught the eye of one girl.

The drums continue, the women's and children's voices grow shriller and shriller, war whoops fill the air. Three of the boys stop before one medicine man, standing erect, their chests thrown out. Three others face the medicine man on the opposite side. The medicine man produces two short pieces of red willow, prepared for the occasion, looking somewhat like the skewers butchers use to fasten the roast of beef. The stick is about four inches long with one end pointed — the point hardened by fire and then scraped. Now the medicine man gathers as much of the flesh on the youth's chest as he can between his thumb and forefinger, forcing the stick through the flesh. The second stick is placed in the same manner on the opposite side, an equal distance from the centre of the youth's body. A loop of deer hide, about the width and length of a boot lace, is then fastened to each of the sticks. The youths face about, when all are skewered, and to the loops are attached one of the rawhide ropes hanging from the centre pole — the loops when tied are about six inches from the youth's chest, directly in the centre of his body. The drums beat, the medicine man cavorts, the war-whoop rings out, there is a frenzy of movement and sound. The young men, their legs extended, their bodies thrown back, their weight carried by that portion of their flesh punctured by the stick, sway back and forth, blood streaming down their bodies from their wounds, sweat pouring from them. They leap and tumble, but utter no sound. The agony must continue until the flesh is torn through and they are free.

As each frees himself, he rushes from the enclosure, into the midst of his family—mother, cousins and aunts—each prepared to minister to his suffering torn flesh. The wound is covered with the fine brown powder taken from dried toadstools, which to my own knowledge will stop bleeding, and is soothing and healing. It has taken less than 15 minutes for the six to complete their ordeal; immediately six others take their place.

At the same time, daily, for six days, the test is carried out, not one of the 48 young men failing to qualify as warriors. It is a great disgrace to the young man should he fail to pass the test, for in that event he is compelled to help the women-folk around the camp gathering wood, making fires, cleaning game, drawing water—not for such as he are the pleasures of the hunt or the thrill of war. The young girls avoid him.

At the conclusion of the trials for the day, the visiting, feasting and drinking begins and continues day and night. The older women have kept the pots boiling, buffalo, moose, bear fat, beaver tail, deer tongues, ducks, geese, partridges, saskatoons and cranberries fill the pots. Tea—tea on the boil day and night. Drums beat, boys and girls shout and romp, young boys with bows and arrows aim at targets of interwoven willow hoops, which are thrown and shot at while rolling, and seldom missed.

Continual movement, family to family, lodge to lodge, eating and drinking everywhere, young braves singing and dancing. To increase the potency of the boiled tea, blackstrap and other tobaccos,

saskatoons and cranberries are added. These cocktails, with the added excitement of the drum beats and noise, bring out actions very similar to present-day cocktail parties—the difference only the surroundings—instead of chesterfields or bed, the bare ground, the same ideas, however, lying down wherever sleep overtakes them—waking—eating—drinking.

The dancing lodges had been erected where dancers took their turns. The program was made up of but four dances—the “Wood Partridge,” the “Prairie Chicken,” the “Medicine Rattlers” and the “Kid Fox.” Each in turn to vocal and drum music went through their movements. The dances are imitations of birds and animals dancing, resembling somewhat the quadrille and the lancers.

This band of Crees were prosperous—the winter catch of fur had been large. They were well provided with trade goods, chief of which were Hudson's Bay four-point blankets. The blankets, much lighter in weight than a buffalo robe, were used in place of it as part of gambling paraphernalia. The game, between two contestants who endeavored to hide three articles, in their hands or under the blanket which covered each of the contestants' knees as they sat on the ground facing each other. The wagers were for wearing apparel, pipes, dogs, horses and, in a crisis—wives. Sharpened stakes were used for chips. Each contestant had a friend responsible for moving the stakes to the winner's side.

The manipulator shows his opponent the three articles, then he makes passes behind, before and under the blanket, then exposes

them. This goes on for some minutes. He suddenly stops—both closed hands extended in the direction of his opponent. The drums are silent. The opponent claps his hands together and by certain movements of his fingers and hands indicates where he thinks the three articles are hidden. These hand signals appear to have been adopted by the present day buyer on the floor of a stock exchange.

When a correct guess was made, the three hidden articles were transferred to the winner. When a wager is won, another is made, and so continued for several nights and days till one or the other is cleaned out. Should

either of the players become weary, a friend is ready to substitute for him. Their women provide them with food and drink.

These festivities are repeated night and day for the duration of The Last Sun Dance. I had spent much of the time during the week running about, taking in everything to be seen. Yet on the morning following the last day of the festival I was up early and out on the balcony of the Big House. I looked over the flat, there was no sign of life—the flat was deserted. Nothing but the skeleton of the Sun Temple was to be seen.

The Camp had moved at dawn.

One cool morning in Grande Prairie a drummer who was leaving by the early train was awakened by the approaching train's whistle. Jumping into his clothes, he hurried across to the depot where he was greeted by a more thrifty fellow-traveller: "Well, you've lots of time, Bill, but why are you bringing the bedroom pitcher?" "Oh, my teeth are in it". "Yes, but why bring the pitcher?" "Well, you see, it's frozen solid".

"How many ribs have you, Johnny?" asked the teacher.
"I don't know, mam", giggled Johnny, squirming around on one foot; "I'm so ticklish I never could count 'em".

The cat settled down comfortably in front of the fire, and little Jessie sat watching her with happy interest. There was no cat in Jessie's home. The cat began to purr.

"Oh, gran'ma! Come here quick", cried Jessie in great alarm. "The cat has begun to boil".

"Why did you leave your last place?" was asked of the would-be cook.

"Truth to say, mum, I couldn't stand the way th' master and th' missus used to quarrel".

"Dear me! Do you mean to say they actually used to quarrel?"

"Yis, mum, all the time. If it wasn't me and him, it was me and her".

Alberta's "Wild Bill Hickock"

By

Robert Gard

Have you ever heard of Al Martin? Kansas had Wild Bill Hickok. Arizona had Wyatt Earpp. Missouri had Jesse James. New Mexico had Billy the Kid . . . all these men were deadly with a gun. But Alberta had Al Martin, and he was as deadly with a gun as any of them.

Al was called a gunman, and this he certainly was in his ability to use a gun, but he lacked the meaner attribute of the average gunman of starting a fight with a less skillful opponent. He was never known to start a battle, and when actually attacked the other man usually had first shot. He was quiet and sober, liked a game of cards, though he apparently never played for high stakes.

I first heard about Al Martin from my friend, Mr. Norman Macleod. Mr. Macleod is the nephew of the famous Colonel Macleod after whom the town of Macleod is named. Norman has lived for many years in southern Alberta, at Macleod and Lethbridge, and has known more of the famous characters of the South than any Old-Timer now living. Sitting at his fireside Mr. Macleod related the tale of Al Martin.

"I had ridden," said Mr. Macleod, "down to the O. S. Ranch, now the Cameron Ranch, at the mouth of the little Bow River, to watch the branding over the week end. The riders there were Ben Hale, Joe Purviance, and Sleepy John. Al Martin was visiting there, too. The cowboy, Hale, was a big, curly headed chap who had been a sailor in his early

days. He once killed a one-legged man named Casey in a card game near Medicine Hat, though Hale was not to blame since Casey drew first.

Well, in the evening, while we were sitting outside, the two cowboys, Hale and Purviance got into an argument as to their respective marksmanship. They had a shooting match and Purviance won the money, much to Hale's surprise. All the time Martin just sat watching and didn't say a word.

"Next morning Martin said he would ride back to Lethbridge with me, and while we were saddling up for our trip, the two punchers started their argument all over again. This argument was getting rather tiresome, and Martin wanted to put a quick stop to it.

"What are you two talking about?" he growled. "You never saw any shooting!"

"Then he walked to the ash pile some hundred or hundred and twenty-five feet away. He kicked out a tomato can, came back and asked for my gun. After taking a couple of trial shots with it, he took it in his left hand, and his own in his right. He shot under the can lying in the loose ashes, with his left hand gun, kicking the can up in the air, then, while the can was in the air he hit it with his right hand gun. This he did three times, while the rest of us watched goggle-eyed. You bet this stopped the argument, and we finished saddling up and started.

"There was a short lane leading away from the house. This lane was walled by barbed wire and cottonwood posts. I was slightly in the lead, and Martin, on passing me at the entrance to the lane, reached across, jerked my gun from the holster, and rode at a run, cracking the bark off the posts right and left, until the two guns were empty.

"A long while after this episode, I was reading the paper one day, and noticed a paragraph, saying that a man named Al Martin had killed a man named Frenchy, on the Little Muddy, close to the eastern boundary of Montana. This was during the building of the Great Northern Railway. Well, Martin had never impressed me as being a killer, so I looked up Oliver Burge, who used to run a small saloon in Lethbridge called the Black Diamond. I knew Oliver and Martin had been close friends, and I told Oliver I was surprised to learn that Martin had killed somebody. Oliver's reply certainly surprised me.

"I knew Martin," Oliver told me, 'before he showed up here. That was in Texas where I was tending bar in a large dance and gambling house. The round-up, of which Martin was a member, passed there one day and stopped over for a little amusement. After a time, Al, who had been dancing with one of the girls, went outside, and during his absence one of the card dealers, who seemed to claim a proprietary interest in the girl, began to abuse her. Martin came in while this was going on, and called to the gambler who dropped the girl and pulled his gun. Martin was too quick for him and killed him the first shot."

"The proprietor of the house,

fearing there would be trouble between the gamblers and the punchers, sent for the sheriff, who rode up with three deputies and sent in word that he wanted to speak to Martin. Al walked out, not expecting any trouble. The sheriff immediately threw down on him and shot. Fortunately for Martin, the bullet struck the watch in his vest pocket and was diverted. Martin killed the sheriff and two of the deputies, knocked the third off his horse, got his own horse and rode away.'"

"There used to be here in Lethbridge," continued Mr. Macleod, "a man named William Tuttle. He came here from southern Montana. He gave me two accounts of incidents which further emphasize Martin's ability with a gun.

"It had been the custom, when large herds of cattle were passing through a range, to hold them before leaving, to give the local owners a chance to check up, and cut out any of their own stock which might have got mixed in with the main bunch.

"One day Tuttle and Martin, who was then working for him, rode over to inspect such a bunch of stock. On approaching the herd, Martin got off his horse and lay down to rest, while Tuttle rode around to the opposite side where the camp was located to make arrangements with the foreman for the inspection. Everyone at the camp was busy packing up and saddling horses in preparation for starting. Someone asked Tuttle who the man with him was, and Tuttle, on replying, noticed a flashily dressed puncher, wearing two guns, climb on his horse and ride slowly around toward Martin.

"Everyone was watching the puncher, as he was known among his associates as one of those brainless would-be gunmen, who hearing of a rival, had to try him out. As the fellow approached, Martin got up, and stood waiting, quietly smoking a cigarette. The rider continued on until about a hundred feet from Martin, suddenly drew and shot. But there were two gun flashes—his and Martin's. Needless to say, the two-gun man never had a chance to try out any more rivals.

"Tuttle had a friend who got into some slight trouble in a nearby town, and fearing the sheriff would be after him, took refuge with Tuttle on his ranch. Knowing the sheriff, and knowing that the offense was a light one, Tuttle tried to persuade his friend to go in and surrender. The man refused to follow this advice. He was a rattle-brained fool who exaggerated the seriousness of his offense, and took all kinds of precautions against being caught. He always slept in the brush away from the house, after warning everyone against moving around in the night. He would come in to meals occasionally, and then only after carefully scanning the surrounding country for enemies. In fact he made a general nuisance of himself.

"Martin had stopped working for Tuttle by that time, and one morning the sheriff appeared at Tuttle's ranch. He was accompanied by Martin who wanted to see Tuttle on some minor matter. They caught the fugitive having a belated breakfast. They did not see him, however, and the fellow scooted off into the brush. The sheriff and Martin finished their conversation with Tuttle, and

started back to town. When they were about seventy five yards away, the crazy fugitive rushed out with his rifle, and kneeling, took a shot at the sheriff, missing him, but knocking down his horse. Martin almost simultaneously turned, drew and fired two quick shots at the kneeling rifleman. The first shot knocked the heel off his right boot, spinning him around, while the second shot broke the bones of the man's right forearm.

"When the excitement had died down, the sheriff borrowed a horse to ride back to town, and after patching up the fugitive's arm, the three left for town. The fugitive was amazed to find that the sheriff didn't want him at all.

"I spoke about Martin killing Frenchy," continued Mr. Macleod, "and this is the way it was told to me by Tuttle. Frenchy was a big, stout man, a bluffer, and no one, knowing him could imagine how he had the courage to enter Martin's place and tackle him, unless under the influence of liquor. Strangely enough, Frenchy and Martin had once been partners, though so different. One day they arrived in a small town in Montana, and after giving up their guns, as was the custom, Martin went into a saloon and was enjoying a drink with a friend. This friend was a quiet inoffensive chap. Frenchy came in, threw down a bill on the bar, and in a bellowing voice called to them to have a drink. Martin's friend refused, saying he had just had one. Frenchy, without another word, drew a knife, and reaching across, completely disembowelled him.

Martin, enraged at the unprovoked killing of his friend, told Frenchy to get out and stay away

from him, or he would kill him the next time they met.

Martin eventually bought a saloon on the Little Muddy in Montana, and started into business. He apparently did not know that Frenchy had for some time, been running a saloon on the opposite side of the street.

A day or so after Martin's arrival, the reports of three shots were heard coming from Martin's place, and he was seen to come out, saddle his horse and ride away, after warning people not to follow him.

On entering Martin's place they discovered Frenchy dead behind a table. They figured that Frenchy, after bolstering himself with liquor, had entered Martin's saloon, and crouching behind the table, had fired. His first shot missed Martin, and broke the mirror. Martin then shot Frenchy

through the table. Dr. Lafferty, who lately retired as Health Inspector at Lethbridge, presided as coroner at the Frenchy inquest. Martin came to Alberta and lived here for a long while. He kept out of trouble, made many friends, and exhibited his guns only in feats of markmanship. . . . Eventually Martin drifted out of the country and was not heard of for a long time. Then one day, Mr. Tuttle showed Norman Macleod a photograph of an old, stooped man with a deeply lined face. He asked Mr. Macleod whether he recognized the man in the picture. Mr. Macleod didn't. Then Tuttle told him the man was Al Martin who had called in to see him on his way home from Mayo's Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. The doctors had examined him, could do nothing for him, and had sent him home to die.

A soldier was being flogged but laughed. The more he was flogged the harder he laughed. "Wot's so funny about bein' flogged?" demanded the sergeant. "Why," chuckled the soldier, "I'm the wrong man".

Snikes was given the haunted room to sleep in the first night of his visit. He said he wasn't afraid of spooks, but he took his revolver to bed with him.

About 2 a.m. he woke up suddenly, feeling very uneasy. Peering about the dim room he saw a small white hand poking up above the foot of the bed. "Who's there?" he demanded in a trembling voice. No answer and no movement. "Who's there? Answer or I'll shoot!" Again no answer. Carefully he aimed and fired and shot off two of his own toes.

A poor family unexpectedly inherited a fortune. They bought a large farm with hens, cows and pigs. One day the small daughter was showing a visitor around the place.

"Do your hens lay many eggs?" he asked.

"Oh, they can", was the haughty answer, "but in our new position they don't have to".

Crowfoot, Chief of the Blackfeet

*As Told by the Late
Dr. H. George, R.N.W.M.P.
To His Son
Ernest S. George, Edmonton*

It was through the influence of Crowfoot that the western and southern Indians kept from joining in the Rebellion of 1885. "I am sitting on the fence," he said. "I am a friend to white man and to Indians. To rise, there must be an object. To rebel, there must be a wrong to avenge. To do one or the other, we must fully understand what the result will be, good or bad. Why should we kill you or you kill us? Let the Great White Queen know we are for peace. I have spoken."

The Canadian Pacific Railway gave Crowfoot a life pass over its lines. He and some of his chiefs were given a trip to Eastern Canada. He was much impressed by the lodges of the white man, the horseless street wagons, electric light, and many other modern modes and methods. He realized that great developments would take place in the West and saw the futility of any attempt to stop it.

Crowfoot was impressed with the self-sacrifice displayed by the missionaries, and the wisdom, safety and justice of the laws administered by the Police. He took care to advise his children to follow the example of the good whites, and to keep from the evil ways of the bad. He was utterly opposed to the trade in or the consumption of whiskey.

One day in the summer of 1890 I received a wire from the Lieutenant-Governor, instructing me

to proceed to the Blackfoot reserve, south of Calgary, to attend Chief Crowfoot, who was reported as dying. I went immediately.

On arrival at the South camp, Mr. Wheatley, the Indian Agent, took me at once to Crowfoot's tepee. It was the largest I had ever seen, with crude pictures of animals, birds and varied symbols of the sign-language of the Blackfeet all over it.

The tepee was surrounded by some thirty braves, fully armed and completely stripped except for their loin-cloths, ammunition belts, pouches and moccasins. All these accessories were made from skins of wild animals and beautifully beaded. The hideous colorings of their painted faces and bodies was a sight to put fear into the bravest of men. Inside the circle, and dressed like the others, a sentry guarded the opening of the tepee and we were not admitted for some time. After a lengthy conference, the chief medicine-man nodded for us to enter.

Seventeen medicine-men, naked except for loin-cloths were in attendance, forming a circle around the inside. To one side squatted eight braves, their tomtoms going at full blast, and the weirdest wailing sounds came from the lips of all present. In the centre the old Chief, 'stripped like the rest, lay on a large Hudson's Bay "Point" blanket, padded underneath by buffalo robes. The head medicine-man stood over the pros-

trate chief. His naked body was adorned in a conglomeration of color, while a weird, befeathered head-dress topped his sweating brow. A bone instrument, from which a kind of fluid was ejected on his hands, was clenched in his teeth, and his body swayed with queer rhythmic movements. He bent over the prostrate body before him, tapping it here and there to the rhythm of the tom-toms, while blood-curdling wails rose from the forms squatting about. The weird incantations, with the beating of the tom-toms, was deafening, and one could feel the tension that prevailed.

Suddenly the demonstration ceased; then an announcement was made that "Su-ken-Aki," the white doctor, had arrived and was to be admitted. It was an odd feeling to step into that inner circle. Every eye was upon me and every eye and nerve was strained to see and hear what I might do or say. The stench of the tightly-closed tepee was terrible.

At that time I knew only a few words of their language, so I spoke to them through Mr. Wheatley. I was impressed with the gentleness and kindness with which Mr. Wheatley translated my words to these sensitive, child-like Indians. I said that I appreciated their music very much and asked them to discontinue their playing for a day or so. I indicated a day sunrise to sunset, by pointing my finger to the sun, then to the east, tracing in circular fashion above us to the west. Their father was very sick and in need of rest and sleep. Their heads nodded solemnly, no word was spoken as the Indians squatted in silence and waited interestedly for my next move.

The head medicine-man moved to one side, and I went forward to examine the patient. I placed my thermometer in the old man's mouth, looked at his eyes and took his pulse. I could feel the tenseness of the silence while those Indians watched. I removed the thermometer and noted his temperature. The thermometer slipped from my fingers and broke into bits. There was a stir among the onlookers, who regarded this as an evil omen. Indians are very superstitious, often blaming misfortune or death on this very sort of thing. I felt very badly to have such an accident happen. I listened at his chest and found his left lung congested. He was feverish and had a pain in his head. I made and applied a linseed poultice and gave him a sleeping-powder. He slept for several hours. I wanted to give him brandy and egg-nog, but he refused it. He did not wish to become drunk and shame himself before his children.

I telegraphed a report to the Lieutenant-Governor and suggested that I might leave medicine and instructions and return to Calgary. He replied by wire that I was to remain until Crowfoot was better or dead.

Crowfoot was a very old man, and in the days that followed he grew steadily weaker. The Indians became restless and again started their pow-wow some distance away. The noise of the tom-toms and the ky-yi-ing went on continuously. They sent word they had had enough of white man's medicine, although they made it plain that they wanted me to keep on seeing him regularly. I spent my time examining their tepees, their beadwork, their bows and arrows, and was extremely in-

terested in watching them going about.

I learned a lesson from one of them while amusing myself about the camp. He came up to me, and by gestures with his empty tobacco pouch and pipe, asked me for a smoke. I handed him my pouch, which he promptly emptied into his, and gave it back empty. After that, when an Indian asked me for a smoke, I always gave him a pinch for his pipe.

On the fifth night, while in bed in the shack of Mr. Wheatley, he and I were startled by a rifle-shot. We lay listening. Presently there was a heavy pounding of fists on the door. Two young bucks had come for Su-Ken-Aki. "Come at once," they said. "Our father Crowfoot has died and come to life again." So, accompanied by Tommy Lauder, an assistant of Mr. Wheatley, we hurried over.

There was great turmoil—Indians running here and there, messengers riding off with news, and all was activity. Crowfoot had evidently fainted, and his people, thinking he had died, had shot his horse. Three of his wives, sure that he was dead, had each cut off one of the chief's fingers.

The tepee was full of excited Indians and the noise of the tom-toms and the wailing of the women was terrific. The old chief was dressed in all his finery. He had on a heavily beaded buckskin jacket and moccasins. His pants were of buffalo hide with the fur on them, and there were rows of small brass bells down the outside of the legs. His silver medal (Treaty medal) from the Great White Queen was pinned on him, his railway pass was on a

chain about his neck, and on his head was the Blackfoot tribe totem, a dried hawk's head.

Father Doucet was there. Crowfoot was talking weakly to him. As soon as I saw him I said to Wheatley, "He is dying fast. His eyes are glazed over and he cannot see." Through Father Doucet, Crowfoot spoke to his people. His now famous dying words were: "A little while and Crowfoot will be gone from among you, whither he cannot tell. From nowhere we come, into nowhere we go. What is life? It is as the flash of a firefly in the night. It is as the breath of a buffalo in the winter time. It is as the little shadow that runs across the grass and loses itself in the sunset. I have spoken."

I stood by, feeling an awe and remorse grip my heart—strange, too, since I could not understand a word. But Father Doucet quickly translated to me. He told his children he was dying, just as Su-Ken-Aki, the white doctor, had said he would. He thanked the Government and the doctor. He asked his children not to make a noise, but be good. Then there became a great quiet. Not even a dog barked. In death, it seemed the old chief's word was law.

Crowfoot was buried on a hill-top where, during his lifetime, he had a favorite lookout. His burial was carried out with due ceremony, according to the tribal custom. Around his grave were his personal belongings and tokens of affection placed there by his children.

The inscription on a bronze cross which marks the spot is simply engraved: "Crowfoot, Father of His People."

The Cree Legend of Creation

By

Charles Clay

According to Swampy Cree legends Wesukechak is a person who lived long ago. Some say he was the Creator of all things, and call him the Great Spirit. Others refer to him as Super-man in an age of super-animals. But the legends relate that he could do everything.

He made the sun, the moon, the stars; he made the earth again after the flood, and watered it with the tears of his sorrows. He peopled the earth with Indians and all living things. And they talked to him. Only the water and soil could not speak. Wesukechak travelled everywhere, because he had no home.

And all over the Cree country, the Indians point to objects which they associate with him. There is Wesukechak's seat in a split rock on the banks of a small winding creek called Owawakim Newewim (Wesukechak's windings); there is Wesukechak's spoon, a great spoon-shaped rock on the upper Severn River; there is a row of hills about Beaver Hill Lake where Wesukechak danced with his eyes shut; there is Island Lake, which Wesukechak made when he broke a beaver dam; and many others associated with stories which are kept in memory by Indian names.

These stories are bewildering in their quantity, literally, like the needles of a pine tree. And the good reciter of them can keep on telling story after story for many, many days and nights.

There is the story of how Wesukechak, when upon a journey,

came to a tree which was split in pieces. He took two pieces and shaped them into two long swords. These he tied on his hips, and went forward on his journey, shouting boastfully: "Now if I could see a bear!" And soon he met a bear, so he called to the bear: "Muska, astum!" which being interpreted means: "Bear, come here!" And the bear came, and Wesukechak took one sword and thrust it into the bear, but the sword broke. "Do not think I have only one sword," said Wesukechak to the bear. Then he drew the second sword, thrust it at the bear, and broke that one also. And the bear began to chase Wesukechak when the two swords were broken, and Wesukechak ran around a willow bush. And as he ran he saw the point of a deer's horn sticking out of the ground and each time he ran around the willow bush he kicked at the horn until he kicked it loose. Then he picked up the horn and put it to his forehead and whirled about, and faced the bear, and said: "pouf! pouf!" and the bear ran away.

Perhaps, to our minds, this story lacks dramatic point. An Indian relishes it with great gusto.

* * * *

Another story about Wesukechak relates how, when he was a young man, he discovered two Indian maidens with whom he fell in love and desired to marry. These were the old days when Indians had many wives. But Wesukechak was afraid that he was not good-looking enough to please

those maidens, so he went to an old witch who knew magic. Wesukechak said he wanted a new face long and narrow, with nose long and thin, and the rest to match. So the witch made his face long and narrow and all the features alike. Wesukechak went away to a still pool to have a look at himself. He saw himself with a long narrow face, with a thin nose hooked at the point, and eyes and mouth and ears to match. He was much displeased with his looks and went back to the witch. "You have made my face too long and narrow and I do not like anything about it," he said.

"Well, what do you want?" asked the witch.

"Make my face broad and round and all the features to match," Wesukechak answered. The old witch did so, and the young man went away to the pool again and saw his face very broad, with a big mouth, and all the features to match. Again he was disgusted and went back to the witch.

"I do not like my face so broad," he said; "and my mouth is too big, and my ears stick out, and I do not like anything about it."

"Well, tell me what you do want anyway. I do not seem to be able to suit you," the witch replied.

"Make me look the way you think nicest and best, mother," said Wesukechak in a flattering voice.

Now the witch fixed him just as she thought best, and Wesukechak went to the pool, and behold he was handsome. His features were just right, neither too narrow nor too broad, and he went over the hill down to the lodge of those maidens, and they had never seen

such a fine-looking man, and soon the courtship ended in a happy mating.

* * * *

Once there was a great flood and Wesukechak gathered upon a raft he had built a male and female of every species that covered the earth. Finally he sent the beaver overboard to see if he could find land, but the beaver returned without having been successful. Then he sent out the otter, who returned almost drowned without having found a sign of land. Finally he sent out the little muskrat. The muskrat was gone a long time but finally appeared exhausted beside the raft. Wesukechak grabbed at him and caught him by the tail stretching it which accounts for the muskrat having a long spikey tail today. And in the paws of the muskrat was a diminutive piece of mud.

So Wesukechak took the morsel of earth, rolled it between his hands, blew on it four times and the piece of mud grew into a ball, and he rolled it faster and faster and blew harder and harder and the ball grew bigger and bigger. And finally it grew too big so he blew a very loud blast and sent it spinning into the air, where it expanded into an enormous ball too big to see over.

And all the animals went ashore. And Wesukechak said to Kehkawahkeen, the Wolverine.

"Run and see how big the world is now."

And Wolverine ran around the world in a week and said:

"The world is too small.

So Wesukechak blew some more. And the Wolverine was away twenty days in going round the world.

"It is too small yet," said the Wolverine, and the other animals agreed.

Then Wesukechak blew and blew a great deal. And Wolverine said as he ran off once more:

"If I don't return in forty days you may quit blowing."

The Wolverine did not come back, for the world was big enough. And these experiences made Wolverine the great wanderer that he is today.

Then Wesukechak told the snakes to make rivers. And Ma-

hekan, the grey wolf, jumped about with his big paws in the soft earth and made hollows that formed lakes. And he pushed up big piles of mud with his nose, and thus the mountains came into existence.

And Wesukechak ordered trees and grass to appear and they appeared, for he had that power.

And that is how the world was made again and men and creatures were saved from the flood to repopulate it after its destruction.



A man driving along a country road, saw the roof of a house ablaze. He waved his arm wildly and shouted to the farmer's wife, who was standing calmly in the doorway: "Hey, your house is on fire!"

"What?"

"I say your house is on fire".

"What did y' say? I'm a leetle deaf".

"Your house is on fire", he yelled at the top of his lungs.

"Is that all?"

"It's all I can think of just now".



An election candidate had made a speech, but it received scant applause from the audience whom he didn't know included many newcomers from Sweden. Then another man spoke, in Swedish, and was much applauded, the candidate joining in and clapping his best. Leaning over to the chairman as he clapped, he asked "What did he say?" "Oh, he was interpreting your speech".



The late Phil May was once on his uppers in a small town out west. To keep from starving he took a job as waiter in a cheap eating-place. One day a man who had known the famous artist in London came in and took a seat at one of May's tables. When May came to take his order the two immediately recognized each other. "Phil May!" exclaimed the visitor, "and working in a hole like this!"

"Oh, hell", retorted the artist, "I've sunk pretty low, I'll admit, but I've not got so far down yet that I have to eat here!"

Stage, Steamer and Pack-Train

By

Philip H. Godsell, F.R.G.S.

Reminiscences of the old Peace River Trail.

It was a magnificent August day when I boarded the stage at the Transit Hotel and headed North for Athabasca Landing in the summer of 1911. The Athabasca Trail, as it was known, was in reality an exceedingly good road, especially where it meandered through beautiful park-like country interspersed with poplar groves.

There were six passengers in all; some, like myself, connected with trading outfits, others bound for the Peace River country in search of homes, and a real estate speculator who had smelled out the possibilities of easy money in the promised land.

At noon we built a camp-fire, watered and fed the horses, prepared our meal and were off once more. Every few miles we would overtake strings of heavily-laden Bain wagons hauled by horses, mules, and even oxen, conveying trading goods from Edmonton to Athabasca Landing for the North. Usually they were driven by breeds, wearing fringed buckskin coats and black felt hats, who lolled atop their loads as though they had unlimited time at their disposal and not a worry in the world. At almost every turn in the trail we would meet more teams, hauling empty wagons, on their way back to Edmonton for further loads of freight. Since the arrival of the railroad in the west the Athabasca Trail was the highway to the North and all freight for the Peace River and Mackenzie River trading posts as far

north as Fort McPherson passed over it.

Just as the cool mists of evening were falling we dashed up to a huddle of log buildings which I was told was Aggie's stopping place, and half-way to the Landing. Here, after a sturdy supper of pork and beans, flapjacks, cookies, vegetables and stewed fruit, we rolled in our blankets on the floor and enjoyed a dreamless sleep.

A little after six o'clock next evening we topped the rim of a spruce-clad hill and saw before us, enshrouded by a glimmering heat haze wherein wisps of wood-smoke floated languidly, the far-famed settlement of Athabasca Landing. Drawn up to the river bank were two white-painted stern-wheeler steamers, from whose yellow funnels arose white puffs and balls of steam.

As we clattered down the hill towards the boat landing we noticed that the street was crowded with a cosmopolitan crowd of trappers, traders, Mounties, Indians, squaws, rivermen and here and there a few white women.

We shot past the rowdy Grand Union Hotel, club and meeting place for rivermen going to and from the Silent Places, beloved by breed and voyageur alike, then, as the gang-plank was pulled in, we dashed aboard the *Northland Echo*.

As the raucous shriek of the siren echoed amongst the wooded heights the paddle-wheel com-

menced to revolve protestingly, beating the muddy waters into froth. At the bow a couple of Indians tested the channel with striped poles, shouting the depth in Cree to Captain Barber on the bridge. Night fell as the *Echo* puffed her way slowly against the Athabasca's current; one by one the stars came out and twinkled brightly in the darkening sky, while the piney odour from the damp wooded banks became almost overpowering in its pungent strength.

As I sauntered around the deck the next morning I was addressed by a tall handsome man wearing the usual broad-brimmed Stetson.

"Hello Diamond P., how are you?" quoth the stranger with a smile as he extended his hand.

"I'm fine", I replied, "but why the branding iron?"

"Well, aren't you Godsell, one of our deserters and a prominent member of Fred Lawrence's famous "Diamond P?" he asked.

Then I learned that the Peace River Trading and Land Company had chosen to identify their bales and cases with the letter "P" enclosed in a diamond.

Throughout the North the firm was already known by this nickname, and as I was the first representative to proceed inland I was promptly christened "Diamond P" by all on board. The tall man, I discovered, was Max Hamilton, Inspector for the Hudson's Bay Company, on a round of the Peace River trading posts.

At last we sighted the half-breed settlement of Grouard on Lesser Slave Lake, situated on a gentle wooded slope beside reed-filled Buffalo Bay. It com-

prised a straggling line of white-washed Indian houses, a Mounted Police barracks, the trading posts of the Hudson's Bay Company and Revillon Frères and a pretentious Catholic hospital and mission. As most of the larger buildings were painted white with red roofs, the general effect against the greenery was both picturesque and pleasing.

I found that the mail coureur would be leaving for Peace River Crossing the next day and arranged to travel with him. In the morning we set out over the seventy miles of muskeg, mud and up-ended roots that was by courtesy called a road. In places it was a mere gash through the thick poplars, yet, over it all the freight for the Peace River country was hauled. The land was still a paradise for the fur trader and Indian, the coming of settlers being looked on as only a distant possibility, and the amount of goods required to keep the trading posts going was not particularly large.

I had been told of the magnificent sight that would unfold itself when we topped the nine-hundred-foot bank of the Peace, but I was entirely unprepared for the stupendous grandeur of the scene. Like a wide ribbon of silver the river meandered through the richly verdant valley, joined at no great distance by the somber Smoky as it emerged from its purple-shadowed canyon.

Upon the topmost pinnacle of the high grass-covered hill to the right a flashing white dot marked the resting place of "Twelve Foot Davis", a veteran trader whose last wish was to be buried on this magnificent and commanding spot.

We had some trouble in holding back the horses as we descended the steep incline but we reached the river flat safely and swung into the diminutive settlement of Peace River Crossing. A telegraph office, Mounted Police barracks, the trading posts of Revillons and the Company, and Johnny Gaudet's log house were all it contained, while tied to the bank was the sternwheeler "SS. Peace River" waiting patiently for her cargo to be hauled across the portage so that she could depart for Fort Vermilion.

I soon had my little trading post established, then teams commenced to arrive with an assortment of cases, and bales of merchandise and trade goods. One of my first visitors was "Black" Mackenzie, who with his half-breed sons occupied a piece of land six miles up-river, opposite the site of Alexander Mackenzie's old fort. He claimed direct descent from the explorer through a Beaver Indian woman, which current gossip maintained was correct.

In January I got a call to go over to Grouard to straighten up the new Company's accounts. It proved to be a cold but interesting journey across the snow-covered trail, and it was sixty-two below when I pulled on my bearskin chaps and threw my leg across my pinto's back.

About twenty miles out I met the vanguard of the last great mass movement of white people into the unoccupied lands of the Canadian Northwest. It consisted of a team of heavy horses hauling a large caboose on bobsleighs from the roof of which an enormous plume of white smoke trail-

ed through the frosty air. A grey-bearded old veteran was standing before a little window holding the reins which passed through a leather covered slit in the canvas wall. He stopped and invited me in to get warmed up.

Within was a good-sized cook-stove, a supply of split wood, a wardrobe and a conglomeration of trunks, household furniture, harness, saddles, pails, pitchforks and what not. A gray-haired lady offered me a cup of tea, inquired anxiously the distance to the river, and asked a thousand questions about the country. By this time I noticed two good-sized girls and a boy, all dressed in jean overalls, amongst the baggage, who told me they had sold out in Montana and driven all the way with the intention of settling on the north shore of the Peace.

Hardly had I left them when I met a similar conveyance, though far more rickety, hauled by the queerest team I ever saw—an ox and a mule.

Altogether I counted seventy-two of these emigrant outfits on my way to Lesser Slave Lake, where I learned that there were many more behind. A lot of them seemed quite poverty-stricken and poorly equipped to meet the difficulties that would undoubtedly confront them. Quite a few of these new settlers had driven from far down in the States, one family I met having come all the way from Texas, to such an extent had the merits of the Peace River country been extolled in the outside world.

During the short time I had been away Grouard had undergone a remarkable transformation. Frame "hotels", tawdry

cafes and dance-halls had sprung into existence along with the inevitable real estate offices. For miles around, in hayfield and muskeg, town lots were being surveyed; breeds were selling their homes for a few hundred dollars, then going on a wild carouse, and the smallest strip of "inside" property was selling from a thousand dollars up.

The Mounted Police were kept busy in their eternal search for contraband hootch, unloading suspicious loads of freight and scattering it around the snow while angry drivers waved their arms and swore in impotent wrath.

Daily the unorganized caravan trickled in and out of town, some taking the road I had just crossed to the Peace, while others branched off along the Sturgeon Lake trail to Grande Prairie and beyond. Sometimes as many as a hundred homeseekers passed through in the course of a single day. Business boomed and every one, except the homeless breeds who had sold their land, seemed happy and content.

But I was hardly satisfied. The desire to reach the unknown places, to meet the pagan Beaver Indians, and to see the distant Rocky Mountains still urged me on. When I was approached by the Revillon Frères Trading Company to take charge of their post at Fort St. John the following summer I eagerly accepted the offer, and as soon as I could obtain relief I set out along dim and infrequently trodden trails.

It was a pleasant and memorable journey. Along lovely jack-pine ridges we rode, urging our pack-train along down one cut-

bank and up another, through gloomy swamps and over flower strewn prairies our cayuses followed the Indian guide with tireless gait. At night we hobbled the horses, or staked them out on a picket line to save time seeking them in the morning. Across Pouce Coupe Prairie we continued along dim trails barely touched at that time by the foot of any white man.

Then we awakened to find the horses gone. It was two days ere my guide brought the wanderers back to camp. We hit the trail immediately and towards evening came unexpectedly upon what looked like a log blockhouse situated in a verdant canyon at the ford of the Pouce Coupe River.

Seated before an enormous stone fireplace within his stronghold I made the acquaintance of the bearded veteran, Hector Tremblay, the discoverer of, and the only settler in the fertile prairie known as Pouce Coupe. Having had difficulties with the police authorities in British Columbia some years before he had decided to seek sanctuary in the unknown places and had thus carved out this pioneer homestead in the backwoods of the North.

That night we camped amongst a group of Cree teepees upon the bald-headed prairie on the present site of the prosperous town of Dawson Creek—then a virgin wilderness—and enjoyed the rabbit-stew and purple-coloured birch syrup which old Noseky placed before us. Later that evening we received an addition to our party in the person of an old Iroquois moose-hunter called Napoleon, and the blackest Cree I ever saw, named Meskinak.

The latter disappeared and must have unearthed a bottle of whisky from some hidden cache for he returned full of abuse and apparently bad liquor, for he was frothing at the mouth. After trying to hit me over the head with a whisky bottle a couple of times, and kicking down the lodge-poles so that the tepee fell about our ears, I managed to rope and hold the homicidal savage with a picket line while my guide trussed him up, then we bound him securely to a tree and allowed him to sob and howl himself to sleep.

We forded the treacherous Cut-bank River next day and picketed our horses in a beautiful little meadow on the far side. Next night we camped in heavy spruce woods beside a little spring on a high elevation. Taking me with him the old moose hunter led the way to the edge of the woods and pointed down below. A thousand feet beneath us the wicked South Pine roared tumultuously between its wooded banks, throwing the swirling waters into the Peace some miles below. It was a vast panorama of mountains, dark green forests and yellow cut-banks, split by swiftly flowing streams. Far off a pointed cone made a jagged break in the skyline, and towards a distant group of diminutive white buildings the Iroquois pointed with the remark: "*E-ogo Mena - haig- o - Was - kar-igan!*"—"There's the Pine Fort!"—the name by which Fort St. John is still known to Crees and Beavers alike.

We found the swift mountain torrent of the flooded Pine River, swam the horses, and rafted our stuff across. The sun was getting low when we emerged from heavy

spruce woods upon a grassy flat beside which flowed the turbid current of the Peace.

Across the river, upon a long open clearing over-shadowed by a gaunt and ragged range of hills, were pitched scores upon scores of conical skin tepees, while horses by the hundreds ranged the sidehills. The bank seemed vibrant with colour, life and movement. The musical tankle, tankle of many horse-bells mingled with the high-pitched cries of scolding squaws, the barking of angry dogs and the incessant throbbing of tom-toms. High up on a pointed knoll some savage was sending his quavering song to the spirits. My heart leaped at the stirring and unaccustomed sight, for even at this distance there was an atmosphere of primitive barbarism in what we beheld.

Sitting upon our horses, silhouetted against the skyline so that we could be easily seen, we unslung our rifles from their leather sheaths and fired into the air. Immediately we noticed a commotion across the river, then a narrow dugout pulled in our direction to be swept swiftly out of sight by the swift current.

Kenneth Beaton, son of the Hudson's Bay factor, and a Beaver Indian wearing brightly dyed plumes attached to the quill-work band around his raven locks, came up the bank and offered to ferry us across. First, they told us, it would be necessary to pole the clumsy craft half a mile upstream as it would drift that far in the crossing. We therefore dumped the packs and saddles into the canoe and, slapping the animals on their flanks, drove them into the river.

It was an exciting experience crossing the swollen angry river in that scooped out log. As soon as we reached shore we had to scatter through the woods to col-

lect our mounts. Then saddling them again we rode through the far-flung Indian village to the fort. We had reached the end of another trail!

Where is Edmonton?

By

D. G. Revell

Ask the first ten people you meet "Where is Edmonton?", their answers if given quickly off-hand will nearly all be, "In Northern Alberta". But the fact is that Edmonton is 65 miles or so south of the middle of the Province, well down into the south half of Alberta.

This mistaken idea originated when the name "Alberta" was given to the new province set up in September, 1905. Up to that date this name belonged to a "district" that extended from 49°N. to about 55°N. As Edmonton is near 52½°N. it therefore was in the northern part of Alberta District—"in northern Alberta". This idea became fixed in everybody's mind and embedded in the writings, official and non-official regarding Edmonton.

The appellation "Central Alberta" is generally used and understood to mean the district half-way between Calgary and Edmonton, the Red Deer area. As we shall see this too is quite erroneous. Geographical terms are necessary and very useful, but if not correct they are misleading.

Let me try to give briefly so much of the history and geogra-

phy of Alberta as may help to clearer understanding and better usage of some terms, including a few new ones.

Alberta's south border is the 49th parallel of north latitude and is 182 miles long. The east border is the 110th meridian of west longitude, running due north throughout its length of 756 miles. The north border is at 60°N. and is 342 miles long. The west border is in two parts: the southern part is the Rocky Mts. divide and has a very winding course from 49°N. to Mt. Intersection where 120°W. cuts across the crest of the mountains at the north boundary of township 55, range 13, west of the 6th survey meridian. From this point the northern part of the B.C.-Alta. border extends for 426 miles to 60°N. From Mt. Intersection southward the B.C.-Alta. border is about 440 miles long as the crow flies. The N.W. trend of the Rocky Mts. crest gives B.C. a northern tract of foothills and prairie in which is the "Peace River Block" of good farm land.

About 15 miles north of Edmonton the Province has its greatest width, of 440 miles, along the north boundary of township 55.

Lines running due north converge (and finally all meet in the North Pole). Townships and sections are bounded on their east and west sides by north lines, therefore they are narrower on their north sides than on their south sides. This narrowing is corrected at every fourth township along what are called "correction lines" where the narrowing of the townships is remedied by shifting all north-south lines to the west the necessary amount to restore the width, east-west of the townships. The first correction lines is at the north side of township No. 2 and others follow at every fourth township. At the risk of too much detail I may add that the surveying of the townships is done from "base lines" from which two townships are laid out to the south and two to the north of the base line, giving a band of four townships lying between correction lines. No. 1 base line is at 49°N. , and the others follow at every fourth township line.

The westward shift of the townships is also corrected, by taking a fresh start at the "survey meridians" which are as follows: 110°W. is called the "4th meridian", 114°W. is the "5th", and 118°W. is the "6th". From these meridians the ranges are numbered in order westward.

Road allowances are one chain (66 feet) wide. A road crosses the township east-west at every second section, but north-south at every section. Therefore a township is 483 chains wide, north-south, and 486 chains wide east-west.

The north-south middle line of Alberta is 115°W. The east-west middle line is the north boundary

of township 63, the Province being 126 townships long. Where these "middle lines" cross each other may be regarded as the middle point of the Province. This "middle point" is in the north edge of section 33, township 63, range 7, west of the 5th. But the centre of the area of the Province is quite a different point, not marked or fixed by formal or survey lines. The location of this point may be ascertained by finding the centre of gravity of a map of the Province, mounted, for flatness and greater weight, on heavy cardboard and cut out along the provincial boundaries. This centre of gravity is also the centre of the area, which I find to be in section 28, township 69, range 3, west of 5th.

Previous to 1905 western Canada between Manitoba and B.C. was set off into four "districts", for the convenience of settlers and for postal use. These Districts were Assiniboia and Alberta, adjacent to the U.S. border, Saskatchewan along the north side of Assiniboia, and Athabasca which extended all the way along the north side of Saskatchewan and Alberta. In 1905 these four "districts" were converted into two Provinces, to which, unfortunately, were given the names that had already been appropriated to their southern components. The resulting confusion would have been avoided by devising entirely new names, compounded, let us say, from the names of the "districts", giving us "Albasca" and "Saskiboia" as the two new members of Confederation.

As suggested by Table I. it would make for more exactness than now obtains, if we referred to the parts of Alberta as in

thirds, north, mid, and south, thus getting away from the misleading "northern", "central" and "southern". The length of Alberta is much more than twice its average width, hence the advantage of dividing it into thirds of its length. This also corresponds with the existing three divisions across its width, namely "west of 4th", "west of 5th" and "west of 6th".

In Table I. the Province is shown in Thirds and in Halves of its length, in terms of townships and of well-known places. For clearness to readers who may not already know, it may be stated that townships are 6 miles square and are numbered in order from No. 1 at the south to No. 126 (not yet surveyed) at the north limit of the Province. All those in an east-west row bear the same number, and those in a north-south row are termed a "range"; these are numbered westward from certain meridians. These "survey" meridians coincide with those of longitude but are designated otherwise, as described above. Each township is divided into 36 "sections," each a mile square. These are numbered from the S.E. corner of the township, across and

back, west-east, without any jumps. Each section finally is divided into "quarters" which are named S.E. $\frac{1}{4}$, S.W. $\frac{1}{4}$, N.W. $\frac{1}{4}$, and N.E. $\frac{1}{4}$, which are regarded as farm units.

The areas of the thirds are: North Alberta, 92,158 sq.m., Mid Alberta, 99,051 sq.m., and South Alberta, 64,076 sq.m. The North Half is 141,625 and the South Half 113,660 sq.m. in area. These figures are near-approximations and were found by very careful weighing of the pertinent fractions of a good map of the Province.*

From these weights the respective areas were calculated, the total area of the Province being 255,285 sq.m.

*By the goodwill and courtesy of Mr. J. Harvie, Deputy Minister of Lands and Mines, a copy of this map is presented to each subscriber or purchaser of this issue of FOLKLORE.

- Sources 1. Burpee's Historical Atlas of Canada.—Nelson, 1927.
2. Research Council of Alberta, Report No. 34, Geology, by Dr. John A. Allan.
3. Manual of Survey of Dominion Lands—Dept. of Interior, Ottawa.

Teacher, in class in natural history: "Can anyone tell me what a ground hog is?" One hand was put up and waved.

"Well, Dicky, what is it?"

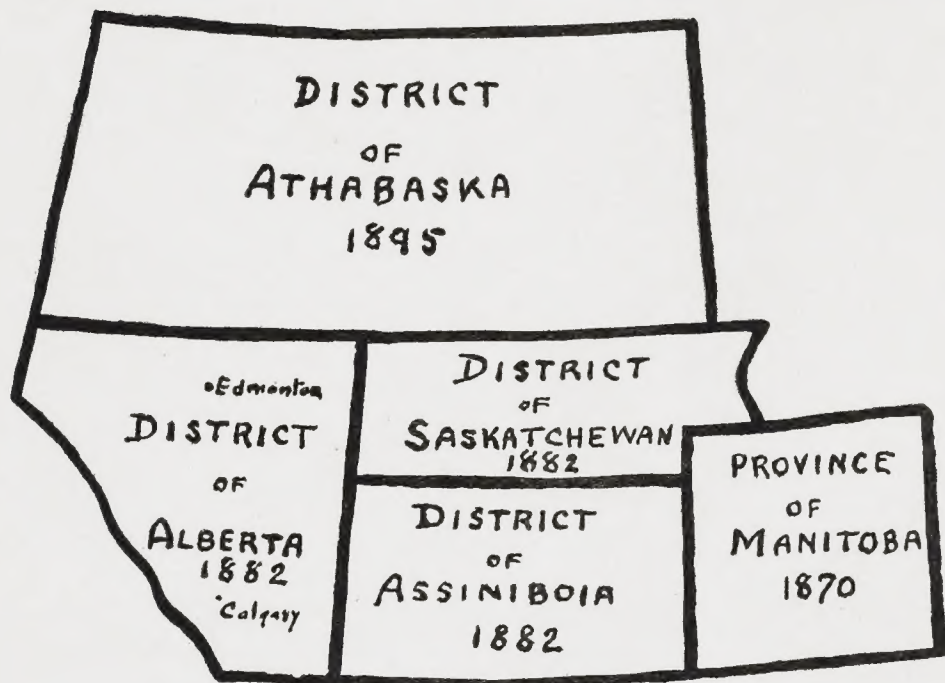
"Please, ma'am, it's sausage".

The teacher had taken her class to the Museum of Natural History. That evening the father of one of the pupils asked his son where he'd been. "Oh, Dad," said the boy, "we'd a grand time. Teacher took us to a dead circus!"

TABLE I.

	Thirds	Townships	Well Known Places	Halves
60°N.	North Alberta	126		North Half of the Province
		124	Ft. Fitzgerald	
		112	Ft. Chipewyan	
		108	Ft. Vermilion	
		89	Ft. McMurray	
		89	Waterways	
56°20'N.	Mid Alberta	84	(Two-Thirds of length)	
		83	Peace River	
		77	McLennan	
		73-4-5	Lesser Slave Lake	
		71	Grande Prairie	
		67	Lac La Biche	
		66	Athabasca	
		63	(North limit of South Half)	
		53	Edmonton	
		52	" "	
		50	Lloydminster	
		47	Camrose	
		46	Wetaskiwin	
		44	Wainwright	
52°40'N.	South Alberta	42	(One-Third of Length)	South Half of the Province
		39	Stettler	
		38	Red Deer	
		29	Drumheller	
		24	Calgary	
		22	Gleichen	
		21	Bassano	
		19	High River	
		12	Medicine Hat, Claresholm	
		9	Macleod and Lethbridge	
		6	Pincher Creek	
		3	Cardston	
		1	(Township No. 1)	
49°N.				

ALBERTA FOLKLORE



31	+	+	+	+	36
30	+	+	SE	+	25
19	+	1/4	+	+	24
18	+	+	+	+	13
7	8	9	10	11	12
6	5	4	3	2	1

QUARTERLY

